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UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS

Episode #56.

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11:30 to 12:30 P.M. C.S.T.

MARCH 23, 1933

THURSDAY

ORCHESTRA:

ANNOUNCER: "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers" ---

ORCHESTRA: QUARTET:

ANNOUNCER: Out West there's an old saying that "all roads lead to the National Forests." This is also true in many other parts of the country where large areas of Federal forests are to be found. Road and trail building is one of the important activities in the National Forests, and a large part of the annual appropriation made by Congress for the Forest Service is spent on this work in cooperation with State and county officials and public spirited organizations. The roads and trails of our National Forests are the arteries of trade and communication, and by-paths of recreation. If you could place all the roads in the one hundred fifty National Forests of our country end to end, they would form a highway extending entirely around the world at the equator, and the mileage of trails would circle the world more than three times. This will give you some idea of the amount of road and trail work that has been accomplished by Uncle Sam's Forest officers. -- Last week we left Ranger Jim Robbins and his assistant Jerry starting out a crew of men to build a new trail in the Pine Cone Ranger District. When the crew arrived at camp in an unexpected snow storm, you remember, they found that there was no feed for the pack mules, and it looked like a hard trip ahead for somebody. -- Now, let's go on with the story; here we are at the Ranger Station ---

(SOUND OF RINGING TELEPHONE - TWO LONG, REPEATED
TWICE)

JIM: Hello -- Hello. -- (MUTTERING) Doggone 'em -- must be asleep or something.

(RINGS TELEPHONE AGAIN -- TWO LONG)

JIM: Hello? -- Sam Riggs' ranch? -- Hello -- (MUTTERING)
Hmm -- I bet that line's gone out in the storm --

(HANGS UP RECEIVER)

(DOOR BANGS)

JERRY: (COMING UP) Zowie, but she's a bear-cat! Been out yet, Jim?

JIM: No, not yet. I've been trying to raise Sam Riggs on the phone.

JERRY: Well, you'd better put on your hip boots when you do go out. Gosh, when I stepped off the porch this morning I went darn near up to my waist.

JIM: I guess the wind's drifting the snow pretty bad. It must've stormed steady all night.

JERRY: Yeah.

JIM: What were you doing out so early?

JERRY: Throwing down some breakfast for the horses. It's nice and warm in the barn, but it sure is chisley outside.

JIM: Uep. -- I'm kinda worried about that trail crew.

BESS: (COMING UP) What's that you're worrying about now, Jim?

JIM: Oh, hello there, Bess. -- I was thinkin' about the trail camp -- must be darn near snowed under.

BESS: Yes indeed. Oh dear, think of those poor men - out there in this storm -- and nothing but tents.

JIM: Taint so pleasant, I guess, Bess.

BESS: Have you heard from the camp this morning yet?

JIM: No. Andy was going to call in, but I reckon the line's broken. -- Anyway, the men have plenty to eat down there -- which is more than the pack mules have.

JERRY: Yeah.

JIM: I'd better try getting Sam Riggs again. He was supposed to have that feed for the mules delivered at the camp day before yesterday. -- (RINGS PHONE - TWO LONG) Hello? -- Hello? -- Hello, Sam? -- I've been trying to get you for the last half hour. -- Yeah. (STERNLY) Look here now, Sam. How about that hay and grain for the mules at the trail camp? -- Yeah, I know, but those mules've gotta eat. They can't live on promises. -- Yeah, they're nice mules, but they can't live on love and kisses, either -- Yeah. -- Yeah. Well, it's up to you to deliver that hay and grain, Sam. -- All right. Good bye.
(HANGS UP RECEIVER)

JERRY: What did he say, Jim?

JIM: He said they hauled up a load of feed with the team yesterday and dumped it at the end of the road. He was going in with a pack string and pick it up, but he thought he better wait till the storm was over.

JERRY: Yeah, - but there's no telling when that'll be, Jim.

JIM: I know. He's sending his son Phil up there with a pack string this morning, anyhow.

BESS: Oh, that's good, Jim.

JERRY: But -- but can he get through, Jim?

JIM: I think so. After he gets the trail broken into camp it won't be bad. Andy can work his pack string too and they'll get that feed in in short order.

JERRY: Yeah, the first trip will be the hardest. If Andy helps him he ought to be able to make it.

BESS: Oh dear, I hope he can, Jim. Those poor animals -- and nothing to eat --

(FADE OUT)

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

JIM: Hmm. Still storming, Jerry.

JERRY: Yeah, I'll say. -- I wonder how Phil Riggs is getting along packing in that feed.

JIM: So do I.

(PHONE RINGS)

JERRY: There's the phone. Maybe that's him calling now.

JIM: Might be. (TO PHONE) Hello -- Yeah. That you, Riggs? -- Where are you? Archuleta's place? -- Uh-huh, I see. -- Can't get through, eh? -- Well, look here now, young fellow. Those mules up at the camp have got to have feed, see? -- Yep. Your father contracted to deliver it. I s'pect you'd better leave your pack string at Archuleta's, see? -- and load up some of that grain on a toboggan and take it in on foot. -- Yeah, Juan Archuleta'll let you have his toboggan. -- Yeah -- Well, I'm sorry, but you should've had it in there two days ago. -- All right. G'bye. (HANGS UP RECEIVER)

BESS: (COMING UP) Who was that, Jim?

JIM: That was young Phil Riggs, Bess. He couldn't get through with his mules, so I told 'im he'd have to take a load of grain in on foot.

BESS: Oh Jim! How will he ever do it?

JIM: Haul it in on a toboggan, I reckon.

BESS: In this storm! My heavens, Jim, he'll --

JIM: You wouldn't let the mules starve, would you? -- out at the trail camp?

BESS: No, of course not, but --

JIM: If they'd taken in the feed when they said they would, they wouldn't've had all this trouble?

JERRY: Yeah, that's right -- Gosh, he's sure got a tough trip ahead of him now, though.

JIM: Yep. It'll be pretty tough going.

JERRY: Dragging a heavy toboggan in this storm - I sure don't envy him.

JIM: Nope. It will be pretty tough going. (MUSING)-- Hmm. Kind of a tough trip -- (SUDDENLY) Look here, Bess, I reckon I'd better go along and help 'im get that feed in to the camp.

BESS: Oh, but Jim, can't you let him wait till it clears?

JIM: We've got to get some feed to those mules, Bess --

JERRY: I'm going with you Jim.

JIM: Well, the more of us to help pull that toboggan, the easier it'll be.

JERRY: Sure. I'm going too, Mrs. Robbins.

BESS: Oh dear, I wish you didn't have to -- it's such a bad storm -- a regular blizzard, Jim.

JIM: (CHUCKLING) Don't worry, Bess -- You call up Archuleta's ranch, will you? -- and tell young Riggs we're coming up and help him - while Jerry and I get ready to go .

BESS: All right. -- But, Jim, you'll be careful, won't you? It's dangerous in the mountains when it's storming like this.

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

(SOUND OF STORM - CONTINUES THROUGH FOLLOWING)

JERRY: How you making it, Phil?

PHIL: All right. -- It's sure tough going, though.

JERRY: Yeah. Gosh, the old toboggan drags like a ton of brick. You sure loaded 'er heavy. --

PHIL: The drifts're the worst, - this fine snow sure piles up fast. --

JERRY: Seems like we're having an awful lot of late spring storms this year.

PHIL: Yeah. -- Bum weather -- Gee, I'm sure getting fed up traveling on snowshoes.

JERRY: Lucky we've got Jim to break trail for us.

PHIL: Yeah. -- Jim's a good guy, ain't he?

JIM: (OFF) Hi, boys - comin' all right?

JERRY: You bet - slow but sure.

JIM: (UP) Here, it's my turn to pull on the toboggan now.

PHIL: Naw, Jim, we --

JIM: Sure it is -- Riggs, you go ahead and break trail - you know the way -- and Jerry and I'll do the pulling. (CHUCKLES) Jerry's always telling me how husky he is - I'll let 'im prove it.

PHIL: All right, Mr. Robbins -- (GOING OFF) I'll go slow.

JERRY: Phil Riggs is a pretty good sort, -- ain't he, Jim?

JIM: Yep. The boy's willing enough. -- I s'pect he'd've had that feed delivered at the trail camp when he was s'posed to if old man Riggs -- his father -- hadn't dilly-dallied around.

JERRY: Yeah.

JIM: Young Riggs has worked for me as a guard some -- you oughta see the boy fight fire.

JERRY: Gee, a little fire wouldn't feel so bad right now. Gosh, the wind cut's right through you.

JIM: Oh now -- (CHUCKLING) I always understood that tobogganing was what they called "winter sports."

JERRY: Yeah, but there's a lot of difference between scooting down a big toboggan slide with a girl and hauling a load of feed for a bunch of pesky mules.

JIM: (CHUCKLING) Well, I s'pect the mules'll appreciate it, anyhow.

JERRY: They better had. -- Say, where is this trail camp anyhow?

JIM: Oughta about be there, I guess. - I hope the boys have a good fire going at the camp.

JERRY: Gosh, so do I. A fire sure will feel good.

PHIL: (OFF) Hey, Mr. Robbins!

JIM: (CALLS) What's up?

PHIL: (OFF) Where's that trail camp?

JIM: (CALLS) Ought to be right ahead of you - Wait a minute - we're coming. - (TO JERRY) I guess the boys are snowed in plenty deep by now.

PHIL: (CLOSER) Hey, look! There's one of the tents!

JERRY: Where?

PHIL: Right there -- see?

JIM: Hmm. Darn near snowed under. Here, you boys - help me get the snow off this tent. - There may be men under it.

(SWISHING OF CANVAS, TUGGING & GRUNTING)

JERRY: She's clear, Jim.

JIM: Pull 'er up, now -- so I can get in. -- That's right.

PHIL: See anything?

JIM: (UNDER TENT) No one in here. - Just some cans of grub and a cooking outfit. Gimme a hand, (COMING UP) -- we'd better look in the other tent, pronto. --

JERRY: Yeah -- Here -- (MORE SWISHING) - Gosh, this tent's sure buried deep --

PHIL: I hope nobody's under it.

JERRY: Look - what's that?!

PHIL: It's a man's boot.

JIM: Here - help me dig it out -- quick!

(MORE DIGGING AND PUFFING)

JERRY: Here's the other one. -- They're empty!

JIM: Hmm, I was kinda scared there might be a man in 'em.

JERRY: Lemme crawl into this tent, Jim.

JIM: All right. -- Boost 'er up, Phil. -- There.

JERRY: (under tent) Nary a soul -- not even a roll of blankets.

JIM: Hmm. -- Andy and his crew must've pulled out.

JERRY: We couldn't've passed 'em on the trail, could we?

PHIL: Naw, I don't see how -- not even in this blizzard.

JIM: We'd better scout around a bit. -- Phil -- you go up that way and I'll go around here -- we'll circle the camp and see if we can pick up any tracks.

PHIL: (going off) All right.

JIM: Jerry, see if you can clear off a spot and get a fire started -- and fix up something to eat -- while we're lookin' for that trail crew ---

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

(INTERMITTENT GUSTS OF WIND -- CONTINUE THROUGH FOLLOWING)

PHIL: Funny thing we didn't find a single track.

JIM: Well, in this storm it wouldn't take long to cover 'em up.

JERRY: What are we going to do now, Jim?

JIM: I s'pect first of all we'd better finish up this can of beans.

PHIL: Yeah. They sure go good.

JIM: Then I guess we've got to find that trail crew.

PHIL: Yeah.

JERRY: Lemme have some more of those beans, Jim.

JIM: Sure. (CHUCKLES) Jerry's a regular bean hound.

PHIL: What'll we do with this toast Jerry made out of the frozen bread?

JERRY: Aw, it ain't so bad - Just burned a little - You try cooking in a snow storm.

JIM: (CHUCKLING) Well, maybe the birds'll be able to eat it. -- Stick it up in the crotch of that tree, Phil.

(PAUSE)

PHIL: (OFF) Hey, Mr. Robbins! There's a tin can in the tree here -- with a paper in it!

JIM: Huh? What kind of a paper?

PHIL: It's a note - (COMING UP) Here -- see?

JIM: Let's see it. -- Hmm. It says: (READING) "Blizzard all night. Phone wouldn't work this morning. Afraid of being snowed in with mules. Going out Big Bend side with crew by short cut trail. Andy." -- Hmm.

JERRY: Gone out the short trail -- huh?

JIM: Yep. -- I reckon Andy used his head that time.

JERRY: See what my toast did - it helped solve the mystery.

PHIL: Yeah. Even if we couldn't eat it.

JIM: Well, it looks like our errand of mercy in behalf of the mules kinda fizzled out.

JERRY: Do you think the trail crew'll get out all right that way, Jim?

PHIL: That trail's a lot shorter but it's terrible rough country.

JERRY: I'll say it is. I came through there last summer on horseback, -- it's nothing but dry gulches that break off in sharp falls.

JIM: I reckon we'd better follow 'em out so we'll be sure they made it to Big Bend.

PHIL: Yeah. That trail ain't any too easy, -- even when the weather's good.

JIM: Nope. -- You boys throw that grain we hauled up under one of the tents. -- We'll take the empty toboggan along with us.

PHIL: Anything else you want?

JIM: Yes. Wind up that rope you had around the feed and tie it on the toboggan.

JERRY: How about some grub?

JIM: Yep. Get some of that canned stuff and put it in the knapsack. -- We've got to be moving if we want to get out of these mountains before night.

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

(SOUND OF STORM - CONTINUES INTERMITTENTLY THROUGH FOLLOWING)

PHIL: (CALLS) Hey Mr. Robbins-- slow up a little, will yuh?

JIM: (OFF) What's the trouble? -- (CLOSER) Where's Jerry?

PHIL: He's back there with the toboggan. (CALLS) Hey, Jerry!

JERRY: (OFF) I'm coming.

JIM: (UP) Sure is a mean storm.

JERRY: (COMING UP) Say -- don't travel so fast -- This darn toboggan --

JIM: I'll take 'er, Jerry. You've had your spell pulling 'er.

JERRY: Okay with me. -- It don't weigh anything -- but it's a blamed nuisance -- always catching on things and getting tangled up with your snowhees.

PHIL: Lemme break trail, Jim. -- I know the way.

JIM: Sure you know this trail, Phil?

PHIL: Sure. (GOING OFF) Let's travel.
(PAUSE - WIND UP IN GUSTS)

JERRY: Gosh, these late spring storms sure are holy terrors.

JIM: So they are. -

JERRY: Phil's pulling ahead again, Jim.

JIM: Yeah, I see --

JERRY: Ouch! -- Doggone -- That was a boulder I hit then like to broke my webs.

JIM: Huh - say, Jerry - I'm just wondering - This country don't look right to me --

JERRY: Huh?

JIM: Yes sir -- we must be off the trail. That's mighty dangerous in rough country like this, Jerry.

JERRY: Yeah, you bet it is.

JIM: Come on -- we better catch up with Phil.

JERRY: Yeah -- (PAUSE) -- I can't see him, Jim -- Darn this wind!

JIM: He was right ahead a minute ago. -- (CALLS) Hi, Phil! -- Hey there! (PAUSE)

JERRY: Jim, listen!

PHIL: (WAY OFF) Jim -- help! -- H-e-l-p -- J-i-m!

JERRY: (EXCITED) That's Phil! -- He's calling for help!
(FADEOUT WITH SOUND OF STORM UP)

ANNOUNCER:

A cry for help comes through the blinding snowstorm. Something must have happened to young Phil Riggs. -- We leave Ranger Jim and Jerry now as they hurry to answer his call for help. Next Thursday at this hour, we go on with the story of Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers.

We wish again to thank all of you who have written to us in appreciation of this program. It has not been possible to answer all of you individually, but we want you to know that we are mighty glad to have your letters. If you like Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers, tell us so.

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